



Threads of the universe, woven in flesh: a doctor's perspective

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As a doctor, I find myself more and more caught between the realms of the human body and the world we live in. The two are not separate, as we often think, but are interconnected, like the veins that run through the earth itself. When I look at some health conditions, I don't just see symptoms, I see reflections, or rather, repercussions of the imbalance we have created in the natural world.

Take water, for example. Once pure, it is now tainted with our waste, our neglect. We pollute our rivers and lakes, throwing away the very essence of life, and then are surprised when it returns to us. Impurities enter the bloodstream, clogging our vessels in the same way as our toxins clog the water's flow. It is a cycle of destruction, one mirrored inside our own bodies.

Then there's the soil, the earth beneath our feet. We ravage it, erode it, pour chemicals into it, and yet we wonder why skin diseases and allergies are on the rise. The earth, like our skin, is a barrier, a protector. But when it is violated, it fights back, just as our bodies do. What we put into the soil, into the air, into the water, is now finding its way back into us, manifesting in ways we can no longer ignore.

And then there is the greed that drives us to expand, to build, to take, without thought of the consequences. We tear down forests, we pave over sacred ground, and we build our towers to the sky. But in our pursuit of progress, have we not invited the growth of something darker? Cancer, tumors, invasive cells - these are not just diseases; they are a manifestation of our overreach, an embodiment of what happens when we disrupt the delicate balance of life. The land that once fed and protected us now reflects our greed, our disregard for what we had. We took too much, and now we pay in kind.

But it's not just the land, the air, the water; our very souls are woven into the fabric of this chaos. The hatred, the jealousy and violence we unleash on others, on the animals, on the planet; it all finds its way back to us. It turns inward, like a sickness and manifests as autoimmune diseases, where our own cells attack other cells. I feel this is a reflection of our inner turmoil, our disconnection from the peace that nature once offered.

Look at the fertility of the land. Once bountiful, it is now barren. Our carelessness has drained the earth of its vitality, and in

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turn, we see the rise of infertility among us, humans who were once born of the same earth. It's as if we've severed the sacred bond, and nature, in its quiet unnoticed way, takes back what we've stolen. It's not just the land's fertility that has dwindled, it's ours as well.

Covid-19 revealed this, in a way. The pandemic was a mirror, reflecting back what we had done. As we cloaked the earth in plastic, suffocating nature under layers of our own creation, we too were forced to cover ourselves. We wore masks, we sealed ourselves in, we isolated. Even in death, we couldn't escape this disconnection, as the bodies of those lost to the virus were wrapped in plastic and burned. It was as if the earth had wrapped us in the same suffocating material we had used to smother it.

And perhaps this is the cruelest irony that in our desperate need to control nature, to conquer it, we became prisoners of our own making. The more we encase the world in plastic, the more we encase ourselves. We cannot separate the two. What we do to nature, we do to ourselves. The reflection is undeniable.

"Yatha Pinde, Tatha Brahmande" which means "as it is in the body, so it is in the cosmos". The ancient wisdom of this truth rings louder now than ever before. What happens on the microcosmic level, within the

body, mirrors the turmoil, the imbalance, the greed and the violence that reverberate across the macrocosm on the earth, in the universe. We cannot separate ourselves from the world around us. We are, in fact, one and the same. The suffering of the planet is the suffering of the body; the destruction of nature is the destruction of spirit. It is a reflection, a resonance, a truth that cannot be ignored.

As a public health doctor, I have come to realize that the health of the body cannot be separated from the health of the world around us. The two are intertwined, just as our lives are deeply connected to the rhythms of nature. Instead of focusing only on illness, I now see that meaningful healing requires a more holistic view - a vision that looks beyond the individual to the broader environment that sustains us all.

I may not be able to change the course of the planet, but I can help communities understand that their health is deeply connected to the health of the air, water, and soil around them. By encouraging practices that respect both human well-being and the environment, and advocating for policies that protect our shared resources, I can contribute, in my small way, to a long-term balance. The changes may come slowly, but they are possible and, in time, they can make a real difference to both the well-being of the people and the health of the planet.